NCRR's Council Members Hear Presentations from Grantees

Principal investigators from the Clinical and Translational Science Awards (CTSA) and National Primate Research Center (NPRC) programs discussed their accomplishments at the National Advisory Research Resources Council meeting held on January 30, 2008, on the NIH campus in Bethesda.

The Advisory Council, whose members are experts from such diverse fields as science, policy, law, economics, and management, provides the second level of grant reviews and advises NCRR on funding activities, policies, and programs. The January meeting was the first time that Council members heard directly from representatives of the 24 CTSA recipients since that program began in 2006.

Presenters from the CTSA program provided several vivid examples of innovations that will facilitate collaborations among researchers from many disciplines. For example, Columbia University has developed Work Web, a database tool that connects researchers who have complementary skills and specialties. In addition, a multidisciplinary pilot awards program encourages researchers who haven't worked together before to form new teams. The University of Rochester has used its CTSA, together with funds from New York State, toward a new clinical science building designed with open spaces that encourage scientists and staff to interact. Mayo Clinic has promoted multidisciplinary science for years, but it is now providing a central administrative "home" for such disciplines as genomics, proteomics, metabolomics, and informatics and is facilitating the application of these cutting-edge disciplines to personalized medicine.

But CTSA sites have not only enhanced collaboration at their own institutions, they have also strengthened multi-institutional networks. For example, the CTSA to Vanderbilt University has enhanced the university's long-standing alliance with Meharry Medical College by making additional shared resources available to the two institutions.

CTSA member institutions have been making strides toward engaging communities in the research process. Columbia University has used CTSA support to establish the Community Engagement Resource, which helps people in the community understand how their participation contributes to research. Columbia also received an NIH Roadmap National Clinical Research Associates award to build models for conducting clinical research in community medical practices. The University of Iowa has established a community roundtable, primarily composed of local health centers that serve minority groups. It is also working with health care organizations across the state to develop best practice guidelines for community engagement.

Much progress also has been made toward sharing and leveraging resources across all 24 CTSA recipients, which are organized as a consortium. Through various committees, the consortium is finding ways for different CTSA recipients to collaborate more efficiently. In this way, the consortium is providing a national identity and unified voice for clinical and translational science.

At the January meeting, Council members also heard from directors of several NPRCs—centers that provide the specialized resources and intellectual infrastructure necessary for performing translational research on nonhuman primates. For the past 50 years, the NPRC program has developed primate models for atherosclerosis; energized HIV/AIDS research with the discovery of the simian form of the virus; discovered areas in the brain that are important for memory; established foundations for work on stem cells; and contributed to assisted reproductive technologies, gene therapy, and regenerative medicine.

Like the CTSA program, the eight NCRR-funded NPRCs are focusing on collaborations that will further enhance the impact of their work. For example, they have established working groups to integrate their efforts and strengthen their collaborations, and they have begun to work with the Biomedical Informatics Research Network to meet information technology needs.

Many NPRCs have also linked to other NIH-supported collaborations. For example, the New England NPRC works with Regional Centers of Excellence for Biodefense and Emerging Infectious Diseases Research and the global Center for HIV-AIDS Vaccine Immunology, two groups supported by the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases. The California NPRC participates in the Centers of Excellence in Translational Human Stem Cell Research, which is

supported by the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute; the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke; and the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases.

NPRCs also are connecting with CTSAs. Five of the eight NPRCs are at institutions that also have CTSAs, and at some institutions, such as the University of California, Davis, CTSA and NPRC investigators serve on each other's leadership and advisory committees.

The CTSA and NPRC programs are among many NCRR initiatives that encourage collaboration among researchers and health care providers across disciplines and institutions. These efforts, along with those by other NIH institutes and centers, will further the NCRR and NIH goal of transforming how translational and clinical science are conducted. For more information about the CTSA and NPRC programs, please visit www.ncrr.nih.gov.

NCRR Grantee Receives Wolf Prize

The Wolf Foundation of Israel has announced it will award the 2008 Wolf Prize in Chemistry to William E. Moerner, an NCRR grantee at Stanford University in California. Moerner will share the $100,000 award with Allen J. Bard of the University of Texas at Austin for their pioneering work developing single-molecule optical imaging and electrochemistry, respectively. These technologies enable researchers to study the properties of individual molecules. Moerner, who is a chemistry professor at Stanford and also a member of the National Academies of Science, will receive the Wolf Prize from Israeli President Shimon Peres in Jerusalem on May 25, 2008.

SciAm 50 Honors NCRR Grantee

Richard D. Smith, a Battelle Fellow at the Department of Energy's Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, has been named one of 50 outstanding leaders in the 2007 Scientific American 50 (SciAm 50)—an annual list of 50 key contributors in science and technology—for creating a new approach to help detect the earliest stages of Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, and other neurological diseases. He shares the honor with collaborator Desmond Smith of the David Geffen School of Medicine at the University of California, Los Angeles. Richard Smith is the director of the NCRR-funded Proteomics Research Resource for Integrative Biology. The complete list of this year's winners for the SciAm 50 appears in the January 2008 issue of *Scientific American.* It can also be viewed on the magazine's Web site at www.sciam.com/article.cfm?id=sciam-50-2007.

New Video About NCRR

A new NCRR multimedia presentation entitled "Harnessing Innovation to Advance Human Health" is available on the NCRR Web site (http://videocast.nih.gov/podcast/ncrr/NCRRNovPromo_web.mov). Through compelling images and narration, the video presents what NCRR does and, in particular, how it helps bring together diverse research teams to realize the full potential of shared biomedical resources. The project was made possible by NCRR grantees who provided photographs and video footage of NCRR-funded laboratories, technologies, resource centers, and animal models. ■

■ These images are from a new video on NCRR's Web site that explains the Center's role in supporting biomedical research.